

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 OMB-01 EA-11 DRC-01 /161 W

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R 141205Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 535

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

RUESURSKAMCONSUL JERUSALEM 5087

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION USUNHNY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 9224

PARIS FOR SISCO

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR PINT IS

SUBJ: OPPOSITION LEADER BEGIN CRITICIZES MEIR AND KISSINGER IN
KNESSET DEBATE

1. IN COURSE OF KNESSET DEBATE NOVE 13, LIKUD OPPOSITION LEADER MENAHEM BEGIN CALLED ON MRS MEIR TO RESIGN ACCUSING HER OF FAILING TO MOBILIZE RESERVES SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE OCTOBER 6 DESPITE ALLEGED CALL BY CHIEF OF STAFF ELAZAR FOR PREEMPTIVE STRIKE. BEGIN SAID THAT MRS MEIR HAD FAILED TO WURN CABINETD AND KNESSET FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND SEUCIRYT COMMITTEE OF SYRIAN AND AGYPTIAN MILITARY CONCENTRATIONS DESPITE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO HER. BEGIN FURTHER ASKED RHETORICALLY WHO WAS DECIDING THAT ISRAEL SHOULD GO TO A PEACE CONFERENCE IN GENEVA IN EARLY DECEMBER, AND REPEATED HIS VIEW THAT PRESENT GOVERNMENT COULD NOT ENTER INTO PEACE NEGOTIATIONS SINCE ITS MANDATE HAD ALREADY EXPIRED.

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2. BEGIN THEN PROCEEDED TO LAUNCH ATTACK AGAINST SECRETARY

KISSINGER. HE REJECTED POSSIBLE US GUARANTEES TO ISRAEL MENTIONED IN SECRETARY'S PEKING PRESS INTERVIEW, CITING HISTORICAL EXAMPLES INCLUDING EUROPEAN GUARANTEES FOR SUDETENLAND AND RHINELAND IN THIRTIES AND US GUARANTEES TO ISRAEL AFTER SINAI CAMPAIGN TO SHOW THAT SUCH GUARANTEES HAD NOT WORKED IN PAST.

3. BEGIN ALSO RAISED ISSUE OF SECRETARY'S JEWISH BACKGROUND AS POSSIBLE LIMITATION TO HIS OBJECTIVES IN HANDLING ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE. THIS PRODUCED HEATED EXCHANGE ON KNESSET FLOOR WITH SEVERAL MEMBERS SHOUTING THEIR DISAGREEMENT.

4. MRS MEIR, IN REPLY, STATED THAT (A) SHE WOULD NOT RESIGN; (B) GOI HAD NOT YET DISCUSSED DATE OR PLACE OF PEACE CONFERENCE; (C) SHE HAD GIVEN MOBILIZATION ORDER TEN MINUTES AFTER MOBILIZATION PLAN WAS BROUGHT TO HER AND (D) PERSONAL CRITICISM OF SECRETARY WAS NOT TO BEGIN'S CREDIT. MRS MEIR ADDED THAT GOI WAS NOT IN HABIT OF COMMENTING ON PERSONALITIES OF FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS.

5. COMMENT: BEGIN'S CALL FOR GOVERNMENT'S RESIGNATION IS DEMAGOGIC GRANDSTANDING BUT LABOR KNESSET MEMBER TOLD US THAT ALIGNMENT HAS NO GOOD ANSWER REGARDING HIS CHARGES OF PREWAR UNPREPAREDNESS. SEVERAL KNESSET MEMBERS ALSO EXPRESSED TO US THEIR CONCERN ABOUT PACE AND GOALS OF US DIPLOMACY, INCLUDING SECRETARY'S REFERENCE IN PEKING TO POSSIBLE US GUARANTEES FOR ISRAELI SECURITY.
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